



# Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

**Letter No. 3424**

**August 3, 2007**

**USDA ANNOUNCES ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS** – Agriculture Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs Bruce Knight announced (August 1) the availability of an additional \$35 million in emergency funding for the bovine tuberculosis (TB) eradication program. This is in addition to \$2 million in emergency funding already available for tuberculosis control and eradication. Knight said, “This bovine TB funding will support enhanced surveillance efforts and indemnity for infected herds and brings the program significantly closer to eradication of the disease in New Mexico. This funding also will support our efforts to protect the health of the national herd and prevent disease spread.” A herd at an isolated dairy farm in Curry County, New Mexico tested positive for TB in June, and the emergency funding will allow for depopulation and indemnification of the infected herd. The USDA funding also will help support overall TB eradication efforts, which include surveillance, control and epidemiologic investigations. Currently all states are designated accredited-free for TB, except Minnesota and portions of Michigan and New Mexico. **Contact: Karen Eggert, (301) 734-7280.**

**USDA UPDATES TESTING REGULATIONS FOR U.S. CATTLE EXPORTS** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced (August 1) that it will increase fees charged to grade and certify fresh fruits and vegetables at terminal markets. The new fees go into effect August 31, 2007. The increase is needed to cover program costs, maintain enhancements to the program, maintain the program’s operating reserve and maintain updated technology. Current fees have been in effect since 2006. The Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946 authorizes USDA to set fees for inspection services, requires USDA to keep the level of fees “reasonable” and permits the fees to be raised as needed “to cover the costs of services rendered.” The fee changes were published in the August 1, 2007, *Federal Register*. Copies of the proposal and more information are available from Rita Bibbs-Booth, AMS Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Room 0640-S/USDA Stop 0295, Washington, DC 20250-0295; or by calling (202) 720-0391. **Contact: Jimmie Turner, (202) 720-6179.**

**USDA HOSTS INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON MANAGING INVASIVE SPECIES** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will host a three-day international symposium August 7 through August 9 on managing invasive (or nonnative) wildlife species. It will be conducted by the APHIS Wildlife Services National Wildlife Research Center (NWRC) at the Hilton Fort Collins in Fort Collins, Colo. The symposium will highlight research, management and public education associated with invasive birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. In addition to a technical poster session, with more than 30 posters, the symposium is also sponsoring an art competition for students at Colorado State University. Students will design posters highlighting invasive species. **Contact: Gail Keirn, (970) 266-6007.**

**USDA PROPOSES CHANGES REGULATIONS GOVERNING POULTRY CONTRACTS –**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) proposed changes (August 1) to regulations governing poultry contracts. The proposed amendments require that poultry companies deliver a copy of an offered contract to growers in a timely manner. GIPSA Administrator James Link said, "The recommended requirements will help both growers and poultry companies by providing clear, thorough information at the start of the contracting process." Contracts must include: information on grower performance improvement plans, if they exist; provisions requiring written termination notices; and provisions allowing growers to discuss the terms of contracts with designated individuals. GIPSA believes that failure to disclose certain contract terms is unfair, discriminatory and deceptive in violation of the Packers and Stockyards (P&S) Act of 1921.

**Contact: Catherine M. Grasso, (202) 720-7201.**

**USDA ANNOUNCES FISCAL YEAR 2007 AND 2008 SUGAR PROGRAM PROVISIONS –**

The U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) announced (July 31) sugar program provisions for the remainder of fiscal year (FY) 2007 and the establishment of sugar marketing allotments for FY 2008. CCC is reassigning FY 2007 surplus cane sugar allotment to imports as required by statute. Some of the reassignment will be allocated to allow for an increase in the FY 2007 specialty sugar tariff-rate quota (TRQ) of 20,000 short tons, raw value (STRV) in response to the growing demand for organic products. CCC also estimated FY 2008 supply and use. CCC determined that sugar marketing allotments must be established for FY 2008. **Contact: Stevin Westcott, (202) 720-4178.**

**PEANUTS STUDIED AS SOURCE OF BIODIESEL FUEL –** Move over, soybeans and corn.

Peanuts may be elbowing their way into the biodiesel fuel market. Agricultural Research Service (ARS) scientists are searching for economically feasible peanut varieties for that purpose. Agronomists are testing a peanut called Georganic, which is not suited to current commercial edible standards for peanuts, but is high in oil and has low production input costs. Georganic—or similar varieties—will likely be the future of peanut biodiesel because it can be planted and grown with just one herbicide application for weed control, compared to the three to four applications typically sprayed during a growing season for edible peanuts. Additionally, these fuel peanuts are grown without fungicides, which are the greatest input cost in traditional peanut production. **Contact: Sharon Durham, (301) 504-1611.**

**TRACKING VITAMIN K FOR HEALTH –** Could getting enough dietary vitamin K help keep osteoarthritis at bay? Study volunteers with the highest blood levels of the main form of vitamin K—phylloquinone—were associated with the lowest risk among participants of having osteoarthritis in the hands and knees. The study was conducted by Agricultural Research Service ([ARS](#))-funded scientists. The researchers have also determined the amount of several major types of vitamin K in hundreds of foods. Through a collaboration, those data and more are available via the [ARS Nutrient Data Laboratory](#) website, part of the Beltsville Human Nutrition Research Center at Beltsville, Md. Dieticians and consumers, for example, can look up the vitamin K content in close to a thousand foods, using one of two listing choices. To access the Vitamin K Nutrient List, go to: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/nutrientdata>. **Contact: Rosalie Marion Bliss, (301) 504-4318.**

## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

**AGRICULTURE USA CD # 32.07** – The decline of honeybees, bumblebees and bats is causing serious concern for farmers. To increase public awareness of the role the pollinators play in our food supply, a postage stamp collection was created in their honor. In this edition of *Agriculture USA*, Brenda Curtis reports from a ceremony honoring the pollinators.

**CONSUMER TIME CD # 32.07** – A stamp for pollination. A time for thirsty trees. Emerald Ash Borers threat to baseball bats. A new apple from Michigan. Goofs and Gimmicks in mosquito control.

**AG UPDATE CD # 32.07** – WTO head will see you in September. Animal ID across the sea. NAIS business plan to be announced soon. The Egyptian market. Processes now streamlined for imported fruit and veggie inspections.

**UPCOMING ON THE USDA RADIO NEWS LINE** – August 10, World agricultural supply and demand. U.S. crop production report. World markets and trade for grains, cotton and oilseeds. Farm computer usage/ownership. August 13, Crop progress report. Cotton and wool outlook. Oil crops outlook. Rice outlook. August 14, Feed outlook. Wheat outlook. Weekly weather and crop outlook. August 15, Agricultural trade update. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. The newsline carries many stories every day that are not listed in this lineup.**

### USDA Radio Newsline, 202-720-6776, 5:00pm ET

Or go to [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov), click on Newsroom at top of the page, scroll down on right side of page until you see Radio and TV. Then click on Daily Radio News Service or Weekly Radio Feature Service. To request radio features on CD, fax name, station, and address to 202-690-2165.

## FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE

### Features:

**USDA FOREST SERVICE PROMOTES CARBON REDUCTION** – USDA's Forest Service is partnering on an effort to reduce global warming. USDA's Bob Ellison reports.

**ACTUALITES** – Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns answers questions at the National Press Club. Secretary Johanns answers questions from reporters on various topics.

**TV SATELLITE NEWSFEED** – The feed is available Thursdays from 4:15 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET from Satellite GALAXY 26 (C-Band) Transponder 11, downlink frequency 3920 MHZ, polarity vertical, 93 degrees west longitude, audio 6.2/6.8, trouble number: 202-331-8882. Scripts are available at <http://www.usda.gov/agency/oc/bmtc/scripts.htm>.

Comments and suggestions are welcome regarding USDA broadcast services. Call Larry Quinn, (202) 720-4623, or write: 1400 Independence Avenue S.W., Mail Stop 1300, USDA, Office of Communications, Washington, D.C. 20250-1300. Internet e-mail: [larry.quinn@usda.gov](mailto:larry.quinn@usda.gov).

## OFF MIKE

**NAFB SCHOLARSHIP WINNER** . . . was among the reporters asking questions of Agriculture Secretary **Mike Johanns** during last week's national tele-news conference on the farm bill. **Matt Dolch**, Iowa's State FFA President (2006-2007), is working as a summer intern with KRVN/Rural Radio Network (Lexington, NE). Matt first met Secretary Johanns when the Secretary borrowed Matt's blue and gold FFA jacket just before he addressed the National FFA Convention last fall. Coincidentally, a few weeks later, the Secretary was at the National Association of Farm Broadcasting convention luncheon where he presented Matt his scholarship award. **Mike LePorte** (KRVN/Rural Radio Network, Lexington, NE) said Matt "is doing a tremendous job for us." Rural Radio Network has given him a broad range of activities to cover including the Kansas Wheat Conference in Wichita this week. Matt resumes his agricultural journalism studies this fall at University of Nebraska in Lincoln. He grew up on his family's farm in southwest Iowa.

**SADLY WE REPORT** . . . the loss of two farm broadcasters last week. **Russ Ragan**, 44, was piloting a single engine airplane that crashed July 26 in the Florida Panhandle. He died at the scene. **Warren Nielson**, 85, long-time Iowa and Nebraska farm broadcaster also died July 26.

**THE RAGAN REPORT** . . . one of the oldest consecutively running farm radio programs, was anchored since 1995 by **Russ Ragan** (WTVY, Dothan, AL). The program was started in 1953 by his father **Gene Ragan**, who was inducted into the National Association of Farm Broadcasting's Hall of Fame last year. Also, Gene hosted an agricultural TV show for 40 years (1958-1998) on WTVY-TV. Russ was raised in the agriculture and broadcasting environment of the Ragan family and was an active 4-H'er. He graduated from Troy State University in 1982 with a broadcast journalism degree. His farm broadcasting career picked up where his father's left off. Russ also voiced reports for Southeast AgNet Radio Network, and **Gary Cooper** reports that their network "is working with the station during the transition process in the wake of this terrible personal tragedy."

**IOWA AND NEBRASKA LISTENERS** . . . heard **Warren Nielson** report farm news on both radio and television. **Roger Flemmer**, retired farm broadcaster who worked with Warren at KFAB (Omaha, NE), said Warren came to the station in 1970 after more than 25 years of broadcasting at KMA Radio (Shenandoah, IA). When **Mike LePorte** (KRVN/Rural Radio Network) began his broadcasting career at KMA, Warren was the station's Program Director. Warren also hosted a Saturday morning television show on KMTV (Channel 3, Omaha, NE) for many years. He retired from KFAB in 1990.

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